

Information About **Measles** (Rubeola)



What is measles?

Measles is a highly contagious viral infection marked by fever, cough, conjunctivitis, cold symptoms and a red rash. Complications include middle ear infection, pneumonia and swelling of the tissue which covers the brain (encephalitis).

What are the symptoms?

Begins with runny nose, cough, red or watery eyes and fever. The rash is usually red and blotchy and typically begins 2-4 days after the cold-like symptoms. It usually begins on the face and spreads downward. The eyes may be sensitive to light.

How is it spread?

Through the air by coughing and sneezing. Measles is one of the most easily spread diseases. For example, if a person with measles is in a room and coughs, people who come into that room **as much as two hours later** are at risk of being infected.

How long after being infected does a person become sick?

Cold symptoms, cough and fever usually begin 8-12 days after being infected. The rash usually begins 14 days after being infected.

When can someone with measles spread it to others?

Beginning 3-5 days before the rash appears until 4 days after the rash appears.

How can the spread of measles be prevented or controlled?

- **Routine vaccination recommendation.**

Children should receive their first dose of measles vaccine in the form of Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR) vaccine between 12-15 months of age. The second (final) dose should be received at 4-6 years of age. Those who haven't received the second dose should receive it no later than age 11-12.

- **Isolation of persons with measles.**

People with measles should be isolated at home for 4 days after the appearance of the rash.

- **Prevention of measles after being exposed.**

Unprotected people who get exposed may be protected if they receive measles vaccine within 72 hours of the exposure.

- **Personal hygiene.**

Cover mouth and nose with disposable tissue when coughing or sneezing. Practice frequent and thorough hand washing.

How is measles treated?

There is no specific treatment. Only aspirin-free products should be used as comfort measures for measles and other childhood illnesses.

What should a person do if they think they might have measles? *SEE A DOCTOR!*

Immediately see a doctor. Call the doctor first to make arrangements so that other people won't be exposed.

If you have questions, please call your doctor or local health department.

Central District Health Department
707 N. Armstrong Place
Boise, ID 83704
208-327-8625

Valley County Office
703 N. First Street
McCall, ID 83638
208-634-7194

Elmore County Office
520 E. 8th Street N.
Mountain Home, ID 83647
208-587-4407

